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INFO RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1500  
RUEHAT/AMCONSUL AMSTERDAM 0495  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 000518

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FOR H AND RM/F/DFS/FO/AA/CAA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OTRA OREP AFIN NL

SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE GRANTED FOR STAFFDEL JONES -  
MARCH 23-26, 2006

REF: STATE 36288

¶1. Embassy warmly welcomes and grants country clearance to Mr. Lloyd Jones, Majority Staff Director, Transportation and Infrastructure; Elizabeth Megginson, Chief Counsel; Fraser Verrusio, Policy Director; John T. Anderson, Majority Staff Director; Ken Kopocis, Minority Staff Director; Geoff Bowman, PSM (Majority); Ryan Seiger, PSM (Minority); and, Maj. Cameron O'Neil, Military Escort, U.S. Army, to travel to the Netherlands from March 23-26, 2006 to meet with State and local government officials to review and discuss flood protection programs and projects.

¶2. Hotel Reservations have been made for eight single rooms the night of March 23, 2006 at the Carlton Ambassador Hotel, Sophialaan 2, 2514 JP The Hague - Phone (31) (70) 363-0363; Fax (31) (70) 360-0535. Room rate is Euro 127.50 (\$151.97) per night excluding a 5% mandatory city tax per person per night. Breakfast is not included and costs Euro 22.00 (\$26.22).

¶3. Reservations for eight single rooms for the nights of March 24 and 25 have been made at the Hotel Sofitel Amsterdam - Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal 67, 1012 RE Amsterdam; Phone: (31) (20) 627-5900; Fax: (31) (20) 623-8932. The rooms will not be held after 1800 unless a credit card number is provided to guarantee the reservation. Room rate is Euro 147.00 (\$176.47). Room rate is excluding 5% mandatory city tax. Breakfast is not included and costs Euro 20.00 (\$24.01) per person.

¶4. Control Officer for the visit is Economic Counselor Richard Huff - Office Phone: (31) (70) 310-2271; Home Phone: (31) (70) 322-3253; Cell Phone: (31) 65 132-5714; Fax: (31) (70) 310-2348; Email: HuffRX@state.gov.

¶5. Administrative Officer for the visit is Assistant General Services Officer Alfred Braswell Jr. - Office Phone: (31) (70) 310-2210; Cell Phone: (31) (62) 061-3304; Fax: (31) (70) 356-1262; Email: BraswellA@state.gov. (Note: When calling from inside the Netherlands the city code is 070 and when calling from outside the country it is 70).

POST ACCESS:

¶6. Visitors who need unescorted access into secure areas of the Mission must provide proof of a clearance. If level of clearance was not provided in the original country clearance request it should be done by separate cable. The cable should include SSN, and the name of the agency granting the security clearance. Cables must include the ASEC Tag to ensure distribution to the RSO office.

COMPUTER and ELECTRONICS USAGE:

17. Inter-agency security standards prohibit the introduction or use of non-USG owned computer hardware and software at all USG diplomatic facilities. Cell phones, palm pilots, radios and other convenience electronics are prohibited in all secure areas of the Mission.

18. Travelers who anticipate having special needs in terms of either access or computer usage should contact the RSO office before arriving at post.

SECURITY ADVISORY:

19. Since July 9, 2004, the Dutch Government has implemented heightened security measures in response to concerns of terrorist activity. US citizens in The Netherlands are encouraged to monitor media reports, and are reminded to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness.

Tensions in The Netherlands are high, sparked by the November 2, 2004 murder of a Dutch film producer known for his outspoken criticism of Islam; and by the November 10, 2004 raid on a home of suspected terrorists, which led to an all-day standoff and ended with the arrest of three individuals and non-fatal injuries to the suspects and the police. Subsequent arrests were made in connection to this raid and further investigation revealed that these suspects had ties to known terrorist groups. These events initiated a GoN-wide overhaul of its Counter-Terrorism measures, including providing more resources to combat violent Islamic radicalism. There have been a series of protests and arson attacks directed at mosques and Islamic schools in the

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Netherlands, plus retaliatory actions against several churches. American citizens should bear in mind that even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. American citizens are therefore urged to avoid the areas of demonstrations if possible, and to exercise caution if within the vicinity of any demonstrations.

The U.S. Government remains deeply concerned about the heightened possibility of terrorist attacks against U.S. citizens and interests abroad. As noted in the Department of State's Worldwide Caution of September 10, 2004, terrorists do not distinguish between official and civilian targets. Such targets may include facilities where U.S. citizens and other foreigners congregate or visit, including residential areas, clubs, restaurants, places of worship, schools, hotels and public areas. Terrorist actions may include, but are not limited to, suicide operations, assassination, hijackings, bombings or kidnappings. These may involve aviation and other transportation and maritime interests.

An area of concern for visitors to The Netherlands is crime. Most crimes against officials Americans are limited to pick-pocketing and purse and luggage theft. Theft from automobiles and hotel rooms are not unknown. Recently, theft of laptop computers has increased, especially at Schiphol Airport and major train stations. The thieves operate in small groups that target travelers. They are determined and well-practiced at distraction theft. Official travelers have been victimized, losing personal or unclassified government computers, software and data. Travelers are reminded that regulations require the use of the diplomatic pouch for shipment of classified equipment and information.

Streets can be walked in relative safety but, as in any U.S. urban area, caution and vigilance should be exercised especially after dark in the more populated cities of The Hague, Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Red-light districts and public transportation hubs are common locations for incidents of street crimes.

For the latest security information, Americans living and traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs Internet web site at <http://travel.state.gov>, where the current Worldwide Cautions, Public Announcements, and Travel Warnings can be found. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the U.S., line at 1-317-472-2328. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

Embassy 24-hour contact number if you request further assistance is: (31) (70) 310-2209.

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